



# Rivers Alliance of Connecticut

## BOARD

### OFFICERS

Eileen Fielding  
President

James Creighton  
Vice President

James McInerney  
Treasurer

David Bingham  
Secretary

### DIRECTORS

William Anthony

Martin Mador

Sarah Martin

Dwight Merriam

David Radka

Jacqueline Talbot

Lynn Werner

Richard Windels

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Margaret Miner

### DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Rose Guimaraes

### WEBSITE COORDINATOR

Tony Mitchell

A tax-exempt  
organization under  
501 (c) (3) of the  
Internal Revenue  
Code

TO: Sen. Andrew Fleischmann and Rep. Andrea Stillman, Chairmen,  
And the Members of the Education Committee

FROM: Rivers Alliance of Connecticut

DATE: February 15, 2013, PUBLIC HEARING

## RE: RB 6385, AAC Prohibiting the Use of Pesticides at Public Schools

*Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is the statewide, non-profit coalition of river organizations, individuals, and businesses formed to protect and enhance Connecticut's waters by promoting sound water policies, uniting and strengthening the state's many river groups, and educating the public about the importance of water stewardship. Our 500 members include almost all of the state's river and watershed conservation groups, representing many thousand Connecticut residents.*

Thank you for raising this important bill. Rivers Alliance strongly supports strict limits on the use of pesticides. Our mission focuses on clean water and healthy aquatic habitats. The presence of pesticides in all the nation's rivers and streams (US Geological Survey, 2006) is a major contributor to the die-off of freshwater species; these creatures lead the pack in the mass extinction of species now underway in North America and around the world.

Some of the literature supporting the safety of pesticides maintains that, while the substances may be harmful or lethal to frogs, fish, and turtles, they are not harmful to humans (used as directed, of course). Read a little further in the literature, and you will find recommendations that pregnant women, babies, and toddlers should avoid exposure; farm workers should handle the products with care; factory workers should wear safety masks, and so forth through the entire population and our pets.

The history of pesticide use is one long retreat from claims that pesticides are safe. Every pesticide contaminating soil, groundwater, and surface water in Connecticut was at one time pronounced and promoted as safe. Hundreds of millions of dollars will be needed to clean up this safe stuff.

As one pesticide after another is found to be harmful, replacement products appear with the promise that this time our worries will be over. Sure. (And where did all those honey bees go?)